

smallest details. The book contains full-length portraits of forty-three species, accompanied in several cases with an enlarged figure of some of their parts. These portraits are especially interesting to Europeans, from our having no native trees of this graceful group; the only palm of our quarter of the world being the *Chamærops humilis*, which inhabits Sicily.

In the introduction Mr. Wallace has given a most curious account of the almost endless uses to which palms are applied by the inhabitants of tropical countries. It is probable that very few of his readers will have had any approach to an adequate conception of their value, not only to those who live amongst the palm-trees themselves, but also to us and other nations of the temperate regions of the earth.

We should like to transfer some part of this introduction to our pages, but find that it must be the whole or none. We choose the latter alternative, in the confident hope that very many of our readers will see it in the book itself.

*The Botanist's Word-Book: an Etymological and Explanatory Vocabulary of the Terms employed in the Science of Botany.* By G. MACDONALD and J. ALLAN. London: Reeve & Co., 1853.

We are sorry that it is not in our power to recommend this little book, for there are internal proofs of its having been compiled by persons unacquainted with botany. It is full of blunders, and even if correct, it would have been found to be far too meagre to be of use to botanical students. For instance: "Acina. The small granules which make up a bramble or mulberry." Of course we need scarcely add that it means neither, and that they are not of similar structure. "Adnate. Applied to stipulæ growing close to the stem." To take another part of the book: "Nodose. Knotty. A term applied to a particular form of pubescence." "Pappus. A particular kind of seed." But we have said enough, and are sorry that Messrs. Reeve should have been persuaded to publish such a book.

*A Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro, with an Account of the Native Tribes and Observations on the Climate, Geology, and Natural History of the Amazon Valley.* By A. R. WALLACE. Pp. 541. 8vo. London, 1853. Reeve & Co.

This book has interested us greatly, and we advise our readers to peruse it. The travels of a good naturalist in such a region as that of the Amazon could scarcely be related without forming a most agreeable work. That is pre-eminently the case in the instance before us, in which the author has so happily blended the account of his journey with the scientific observations, as to produce a narrative, which no reader, even only slightly or not at all acquainted with natural science, will read without pleasure.

During a residence of four years in the valley of the Amazon, Mr. Wallace visited most of the interesting places upon the banks of the lower half of that great river, and also throughout nearly the whole extent of the Rio Negro. Perhaps the most interesting part

of the book is that containing an account of his two visits to the Rio Uaupés, which is inhabited solely by tribes of Indians in their natural state, not at all altered and deteriorated by contact with the unprincipled white residents on the banks of the neighbouring rivers. Mr. Wallace collected quite a museum of the productions of the Indian tribes, but, most unfortunately, lost them all, together with the specimens of natural history obtained during the latter two years of his stay in that country, his journals for that period and numerous sketches, by the burning of the ship on his homeward voyage. The results which we have before us cause us the more to lament this misfortune. We hope that when he fulfils the desire expressed in his preface, of "again visiting the wild and luxuriant scenery and the sparkling life of the tropics," he may be again successful, but escape the concluding misfortune of his former journey. The author proposed to pay the expenses of his journey by making collections in natural history, and was enabled to do so, notwithstanding the deplorable loss which we have mentioned.

At the conclusion of the narrative there are four chapters on the natural history of the country and on the Indian tribes, which, had he saved all his materials, were intended to form part of a separate work on the Physical History of the Amazon. They well deserve careful perusal, and lead us to hope that, should Mr. Wallace fulfil his desire of revisiting the country, we may at a future time have such a work from his pen.

At the end of the volume are some valuable remarks by Dr. R. G. Latham on the vocabularies of Amazonian languages collected in the course of this journey.

*Preparing for Publication.*

*The Aquarium: a Biography of Marine Animals. With coloured Plates.*

Mr. P. H. Gosse is preparing for the press a work under the above title, which will contain many interesting particulars of the instincts and manners of various marine animals (hitherto little known) as observed in captivity. These will be preceded by a brief sketch of the history of the Marine Aquarium, and instructions for its use.

PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

July 22, 1851.—John Edward Gray, Esq., F.R.S. &c., Vice-President, in the Chair.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW FORM OF LAMPREY FROM AUSTRALIA, WITH A SYNOPSIS OF THE FAMILY.

By J. E. GRAY, ESQ., F.R.S., V.P.Z.S. ETC.

The Lamprey which I have now to present to the attention of the Society differs in so remarkable a degree from any other known species, that, premising that I propose for it the name of *Geotria Australis*